

**MEMO**

**TO:** Local Government Legislative Committee  
**FROM:** Elisa Fiaschetti  
**DATE:** February 25, 2020  
**RE:** Community Development Funding database

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**Community Development Funding Database**

The Governor’s Main Street Montana Rural Partners Project recently launched of the community development funding database. The searchable database will help communities navigate the complex state and funding landscape. The database will help communities identify state and federal grant and loan opportunities to help fund community and economic development projects.

During our Main Street Montana Rural Partner visits, we heard from communities the difficulties of knowing what funding is out there. There are a multitude of funding opportunities available through state and federal agencies, but community leaders across the state can have difficulty finding the right funding source for projects. While Montana’s more urban areas are able to leverage the knowledge and experience of grant writers and people with development backgrounds, smaller communities often lack the capacity and expertise to fully take advantage of complex state and federal funding opportunities. The intent is that this funding database will be a useful tool for our communities in identifying funding options for their local projects.

You can search based on project type, applicant, agency, and more. You do not need to use all the filters, just the ones that apply. The database can be found here- <https://mainstreetmontanaproject.com/resources/>

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with links: HOME, MAIN STREET MONTANA, RURAL PARTNERS, INDIAN COUNTRY, RESOURCES, NEWS, MEET OUR TEAM, CONTACT. Below the navigation bar is the heading "COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDING DATABASE". A welcome message states: "Welcome to the Community Development Funding Database. This searchable resource database will help you identify state and federal grant and loan opportunities to help fund community and economic development projects. Filter your search based on project type, applicant, agency, and more using the filters on the left. You do not need to use all filters, only the ones that apply." A disclaimer follows: "This funding tool is meant to serve as a resource guide, and does not guarantee eligibility or qualifications. Please contact individual agencies for current program details and more information regarding eligibility and project qualifications." On the left, there are search filters for Project Category, Applicant Type, Project Type, Funding Type, Funder, and Population, each with a dropdown menu. On the right, it shows "133 Results" and "Page 1 of 14". A "NEXT" button is visible. A result card for "US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) Grants" is displayed, including a "FIND OUT MORE" button and a brief description of the program. A "MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNT" section states: "No specific amount per project, but typically no more than \$1,500,000. Funding for this program varies year to year." A "Privacy Terms" icon is in the bottom right corner.

We will continue to update the funding database as requirements change and grant/loan opportunities change. Most opportunities are annual or bi-annual and there is little change from year to year. With the change in administration in 2021, we are still working on the long-term management of the database.

### **Main Street Montana Rural Partners Project**

The Main Street Montana Project was launched in 2013 by Governor Bullock as an unprecedented mechanism in the State to solicit recommendations for governmental changes from the private sector. The project has seen great success, and by many measures our economy is thriving. However, there are still challenges we face, and the promise of economic opportunity is not a reality everywhere in Montana.

Understanding the economic discrepancies between our urban and rural communities and taking what was learned in the first stages of the Main Street project, Governor Bullock and Lt. Governor Cooney launched the Main Street Montana Rural Partners Initiative in September 2018. The Rural Partners project focuses on empowering small towns in Montana to stay ahead, support their efforts, and ensure economic opportunities are shared throughout the state.

In Fall 2018, the Rural Partners Project held roundtable meetings to meet with community leaders and stakeholders in Troy, Choteau, Glendive, Lincoln, Harlowton, and Glasgow. Lt. Governor Cooney and Main Street Montana-Rural Partners Chair, Lance Trebesch (CEO Ticketprinting.com + Eventgroove) along with state agency representatives, visited these communities with the goal of listening and learning about the work each community is doing to increase economic opportunities, and how the State can assist. In Spring of 2019, we also held community partner meetings with all the tribal communities.

The project works to address challenges unique to rural and tribal Montana, reduce or eliminate roadblocks to economic success, leverage existing public and private resources, and connect communities across the state to share opportunities and successes. Rural Partners continues to work with each community partner on a regular basis. We continue to connect communities with resources, both state and federal, that can help move projects forward. We have also connected communities across the state with one another to share lessons and successes on similar projects

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